



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

March 12, 2007

The Honorable Judith Spang, Chairman
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
NH House of Representatives
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

Re: HB 710, establishing a commission to study issues relative to the practice of leasing state-owned real estate on the shores of public waters.

Dear Chairman Spang:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 710, which would establish a study commission for evaluating the current management practices for leasing State-owned lands situated along the shores of public water bodies. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill.

DES has long been concerned about the cumulative impacts that could result from widespread leasing of these shorefront lands. Included among these concerns are water quality degradation, disruption of uninterrupted, naturally stable shorelines potentially resulting in added erosion and sedimentation, damage to indigenous species of plants and animals, attraction of invasive species, and unnecessary encroachment on public waters held in trust by the State of New Hampshire. The establishment of this commission would provide an opportunity to closely examine these and other concerns, and would allow for broader public input on how to balance the competing interests of all involved. An accurate inventory of state-owned parcels and their true market value would also be better defined, allowing for more consistent and effective decision-making at a broader policy level regarding their ultimate use and/or disposal.

New Hampshire is the fastest growing state in New England. Shorefront properties, and the water access they provide, are among the most highly-prized real estate assets the State has to offer. DES feels that this commission will help to ensure that shorefront lands owned by the State are managed in the best interests of all involved.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment on HB 710. Please feel free to call me at 271-3503 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,
Michael W. Wales, Asst. Comm.
En Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: HB 710 Sponsors